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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says UNTAES must receive adequate resources as failure in Croatia could seriously undermine international operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia asks Bosnian Government to arrest two senior military officers.

* Future UN peace-keeping missions must be given adequate force and military capability, says former UNPROFOR Mission Head.

* Secretary-General congratulates new Haitian President Rene Preval; praises outgoing leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide for handing over power.

* Talks between United Nations and Iraq on "oil-for-food" formula begin in New York.

* Secretary-General appoints Yasushi Akashi as new Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

* United Nations launches $107.6 million inter-agency appeal for emergency humanitarian assistance to Sudan.

* Hundreds of American school children to visit UN on electronic field trip.

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Adequate resources for the United Nations mission in Croatia were crucial, as failure there would not only be disastrous for the local population, but could seriously undermine and even lead to the failure of international operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report to the Security Council, dated 6 February, on UN operations throughout the former Yugoslavia, he expressed particular concern that the new international effort in Bosnia did not deflect from the need for substantial resources for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). The Mission must receive constant cooperation from the parties, he stressed. Mutual recognition between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) could be the most

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important factor in ensuring a peaceful transition in the region and the return of refugees and displaced persons.

The Secretary-General expressed concern at continuing difficulties in establishing the Federation in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a viable and harmonious entity. While there was full commitment at the intergovernmental level, constant nurturing, encouragement and support at the local level was needed, he said. An experienced UN presence throughout Bosnia, working closely with IFOR, would contribute substantially to the common cause. The Serb exodus from parts of Sarajevo was a matter of great concern. Destruction of property, prior to departure, was short-sighted and reduced the chances of return or compensation. In Croatia, the Government was primarily responsible for protecting the human rights of all its people.

The Secretary-General said he would maintain a sufficient, but lean and cost-effective staffing structure appropriate to the mandate of the new missions. He would terminate the post of Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia and phase out that office by the end of February. Residual political support and liaison functions in Croatia would be handled by the new Zagreb Liaison office.

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The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Richard Goldstone, has asked the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to provisionally arrest, on behalf of the Tribunal, General Djordje Djukic and Colonel Aleksa Krmanovic. Judge Goldstone, who received information on activities by the two suspects in connection with crimes falling within the Tribunal's jurisdiction, is considering whether to indict them. A decision will be made in a few days on other people who have been arrested recently by the Bosnian authorities.

Under international law, particularly the Genocide Convention and the Geneva Conventions, countries are obliged to investigate and bring to trial, anyone who has committed serious violations of international criminal law. The Security Council recognized that the Tribunal and national courts have concurrent jurisdiction and gave primacy of jurisdiction to the Tribunal.

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Peace-keepers involved in an internal conflict must be given adequate force and the military capability to act, otherwise the United Nations would be humiliated, the former Mission Head for the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Antonio Pedauye said today. He told correspondents that from the moment a rapid reaction force with 155 millimetre guns had been stationed on Mount Igman, outside Sarajevo, there had been a different dialogue in town. The parties understood that the force would use the

guns and take casualties if necessary. There was a price to pay for peace, and with 150 dead and 1,000 wounded, UNPROFOR had paid it.

Mr. Pedauye said it had been wrong to call UNPROFOR a peace-keeping operation because there had never been a peace to keep or even a cease-fire to monitor until last October. Paradoxically, now there was a peace to keep, the Implementation Force (IFOR), which was basically a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military operation, had the resources and means to do the job. The United Nations had operated under extremely difficult circumstances, with a limited mandate and ability to use force. The "safe areas" were never safe. They were threatened areas and UNPROFOR had been asked not to defend them, but to deter attacks with only 7,000 soldiers a year after the Secretary-General had asked for 34,000 troops.

The United Nations had not participated in the Dayton peace negotiations, even as an observer, yet it had been given a mandate to establish the International Police Task Force (IPTF) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he said. The UN had to practice "begging diplomacy" and ask Member States for good policemen, deploy and train them, and provide interpreters. There was freedom of movement for IFOR, the UN and the humanitarian agencies along a supply corridor but it would be a long time before there was real freedom of movement for civilians. After four years of war, homogeneity and ethnic purity had increased considerably and there were now only small islands of multi-ethnicity in such places Tuzla, and in Sarajevo, where it would probably end, as Serbs had already began a mass exodus, Mr. Pedauye said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today congratulated the new Haitian President, Rene Preval on his inauguration and wished him success in the responsibilities he was undertaking, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General said he was certain that under President Preval's impetus, Haiti would continue its progress along the path to democracy and national reconciliation.

The Secretary-General commended former Haitian President Jean- Bertrand Aristide for his great democratic gesture in handing over power to a successor and said it was proof that the country was moving even closer to becoming a democratic state.

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Negotiations between the United Nations and Iraq on the "oil- for-food" formula began at UN Headquarters yesterday, according to a spokesman for the Organization. The talks are on the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995), which permits the sale of a limited amount of Iraqi oil -- up to $2 million over six months -- in exchange for food and medicine.

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Before the discussions began, United Nations Legal Counsel Under-Secretary-General Hans Correll met in private with the head of the Iraqi delegation, Ambassador Abdul Amir Al-Anbari, the spokesman said. The delegations discussed procedural matters and analyzed relevant documentation and took note of some salient points to be discussed at a later stage. The discussions, which continued today, were held in a business-like and positive atmosphere, the spokesman added.

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The Secretary-General has appointed Yasushi Akashi as Under-Secretary-General of Humanitarian Affairs, effective 1 March, a United Nations spokesman said today. Mr. Akashi will succeed Peter Hansen, who was recently appointed Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Mr. Akashi, who is currently serving as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, was previously his Special Representative in the former Yugoslavia and in Cambodia.

The Secretary-General has also decided to appoint Ambassador Jin Yongjian as Under-Secretary-General for Development and Support Services, effective 15 March. Mr. Jin is currently serving as China's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva. He replaces Ji Chaozhu, who returns to national service.The spokesman said Ismat Kittani will return to the Office of the Secretary-General as Special Advisor and Kofi Annan will resume his functions as Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations.

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The United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs today launched a consolidated inter-agency appeal for $107.6 million for humanitarian assistance to Sudan in 1996. The appeal will provide food relief to 2.1 million war-affected and displaced people in the south of the country. Another 4.25 million persons will benefit from programmes which provide nutrition, health and water.

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Students from across the United States will get a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the United Nations when they take part in a two-day electronic field trip beginning tomorrow. Turner Educational Services, Inc. (TESI), in conjunction with the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and with the cooperation of the Department of Public Information (DPI) have collaborated on the live, interactive field trip to the UN. Designed as a first-hand learning experience, it will integrate broadcast, cable and computer technologies to offer students a unique learning experience without leaving the classroom.

There will be an hour-long preview programme, a live, on location telecast each day and on-line forums for students on America Online (keyword: CNN) and the World Wide Web (http://www.turner.com/tesi/) with United Nations resource people and others on site and in the field before, during and after the live telecast. Titled the United Nations at 50 Years, the field trip will focus on the Organization's purpose and functions and its role today. The Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, and the Permanent Representative of the United States, Madeleine Albright, will be among the guests.

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